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THE PAGEANT OF THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE.

The Pageant, given under the auspices of the "Antiquarians of the Art Institute" in Blackstone Hall, January 26 and 27, was not only profoundly impressive as a spectacle, but was also a remarkable evidence of the co-operation and unity of purpose existing among the artists and art lovers of Chicago. It is unfortunate that no adequate photographic record could be made of the scenes and settings, but the lines and action are available in the *Book of Words*, and a brief description of the undertaking may be of assistance to the interested student of the period. The pageant was, in form, a chronicle play in twelve scenes, and not a mere scheme of tableaux or processions. There were in all more than seventy speaking parts, the greater number of which were taken by students of the Art School, while twelve were taken by members of the Donald Robertson Company, and a number by the Chicago Society of Artists and artists visiting the city.

For the production, a stage was constructed at the South end of Blackstone Hall; an auditorium seating about eight hundred people was built; the great cast of the Charlieu doorway was moved to serve as a background, the statues of Coleoni and Gattamelata were symmetrically placed at the sides of the stage, and three very large drop curtains, representing in a composite way Fiesole, Rome and Venice, were painted. An electrical equipment, allowing of a complete variety of light effects, was installed, and the hall was appro-

priately decorated. The resultant setting was magnificent in scale and extremely rich in effect.



COLEONI IN BLACKSTONE HALL (See p. 61.)

About eight hundred persons in costume took part, the final procession requiring fifteen minutes to pass across the stage in double file. The spirit of the performers may be judged

by the fact that in spite of the length of the performance and the number of persons taking part, there was never any hesitation or confusion, the scenes following each other with the utmost dispatch. This accuracy and swiftness of performance is the more remarkable when one considers that the entire work had been planned, written, rehearsed and staged within six weeks time. This would perhaps have been impossible under other circumstances, but the broad resources of the Institute were forcibly brought out by the result; since it is not often that a single institution can be found where all the elements for such an enterprise exist—the place, the painters, dramatic artists, musicians, and student-actors; and the public to stand as a patron of the completed work.

The parts taken by the various artistic societies included the following :

The Chicago Society of Artists; the Venice Scene.

The Palette and Chisel Club ; the Guilds of Florence.

The Art Students' League ; the Triumph of Cimabue's Madonna.

The Donald Robertson Players ; the scene between Boccaccio and Petrarch, the Court of Love at Fiesole, the scene between Lorenzo and Savonarola, the Burning of the Vanities. The work of Mr. Robertson as the Herald, and Miss Marion Redlich as Vittoria Colonna, should also be included.

The Alumni Association of Decorative Designers ; the Market Scene.

The Men's Life Class Association ; the Battle Scene.

The Designing Classes ; the Wedding Party.

The Normal Department ; the various Sisterhoods.

The Evening School Students ; the train of Lorenzo de' Medici.

THE BOOK OF THE PAGEANT.

The writing, rehearsing, and staging "A Pageant of the Italian Renaissance" at the Art Institute in January speaks eloquently for the reserve force and available ability of our teaching and student body. Facility is quite as essential to efficiency as mastery of technique. Thomas Wood Stevens, within the space of six weeks from the day of receiving the suggestion, wrote the text for the twelve scenes, all but one in ringing heroic measure, placed the work in rehearsal, and on January 25 saw the one dress rehearsal, followed on the next two nights by performances which brought out a more than representative Chicago audience. The Art Institute School formed a center about which gathered the artistic interests of the city, and the zeal and skill with which the project was conceived and executed were reminiscent of the time of the World's Columbian Exposition. The entire body for purpose of presentation numbered more than 800 individuals, many of the scenes being fairly crowded with actors. A street duel early in the pageant, enacted by the men's life class, brought forth enthusiastic praise from professional critics, for its single-hearted vigor. Donald Robertson and his company of players lent their services to the occasion, and carried several of the scenes through delightfully, Mr. Robertson himself acting as Herald.

The central figure throughout was Thomas Wood Stevens, one of the younger instructors of the Institute, who combined the functions of author and stage manager. His noble lines deserve the praise accorded them by fastidious lovers of poetry, rising to a glorious and memorable climax at the close. Few traces of the haste of preparation are manifest, and such as there are are readily corrigible, even in the hurried but tastefully pub-